



CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. This Association shall be called the "Canadian Anti-Slavery Baptist Association.")

ART. II. This Association shall be composed of orderly Baptist Churches, of acknowledged Christian character, who sign this Constitution, and who have *no union* with *slaveholders*, but who treat the institution of slavery and its supporters, as godless and satanic; separating themselves forever from all religious societies, which are supported in common with slaveholders or their abettors.

ART. III. The object of this Association shall be to promote by correspondence and personal intercourse, unity of faith and practice, fellowship, cordiality of feeling, and union of effort, in promoting the interest of the Churches, and the furtherance of the cause of Christ throughout the world.

ART. IV. This Association shall recognize the power and independence of the Churches, and in no case exercise any authority or jurisdiction over them; nevertheless, it shall have power to drop from its connection any Church, which, in the opinion of the Association, may have essentially departed from the faith, either in principle or practice, and to preclude from a seat in its meetings, any minister or delegate who is manifestly corrupt either in theory or practice; and facts in either case may be ascertained in any way not inconsistent with the rules of the gospel.

ART. V. The meetings of this Association shall be held annually, on the first Friday in September, at 10 o'clock, a.m., by their representatives, who are not to exceed five from each Church, at such place as the Association shall appoint.

ART. VI. The Churches composing this Association are required to send letters to its annual meetings, expressing the names of their messengers, pastors and clerks; the state of the Churches, with their additions and present numbers.

ART. VII. Churches are required to send a letter, setting forth their views on the subject of slavery, and willing to sign the same, and to give the right hand of fellowship to the messengers of the Association which shall neglect to do so.

ART. VIII. The Association shall be visited by its messengers, for two years, and if the cause, and if the messengers be repeated the third year, they shall be dropped from the Association.

BY-LAWS.

1. The officers of this Association shall be a Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, and Corresponding Secretary. The Moderator shall preside at all the meetings of the Association, and see that order and decorum are observed by its members. The Clerk shall keep a faithful record of all the business transactions of the Association. The Treasurer shall receive and keep all moneys of the Association, and shall pay them out and over, as the Association shall direct, and shall make a report of the state of the treasury at each annual meeting. The Corresponding Secretary shall take charge of its records, and do its correspondence.

2. The first business of the Association, after the delivery of the Annual Introductory Sermon, shall be the calling of the Association to order, by the Minister who preached, and the election of the Moderator and Clerk.

3. After singing and prayer, a Prudential Committee of five shall be chosen, to arrange the business of the Association.

4. The letters from the Churches shall be read, and the other business as it may be presented.

5. Visiting brethren may next be invited to a seat, and may debate on all subjects, but vote on none.

6. Every speaker shall rise and address the Moderator, and shall have the liberty of moving or seconding any motion, or of speaking on any subject regularly laid before the body, without any interruption, except he depart from the subject, or some explanation be necessary to a right understanding of it.

7. The Moderator shall have the same right to speak as any other member, provided the chair be filled.

8. No subject shall be discussed till seconded; if not seconded, it shall be considered as lost.

9. No speaker shall speak more than twice on the same subject, without special leave of the Moderator.

10. All personal reflections shall be particularly avoided, in the debates of this body.

11. In time of session, all private conversation shall be dispensed with, and undivided attention given to the business of the Association.

12. All questions of order shall be decided by the Moderator.

13. These By-laws shall be read distinctly from the chair immediately after the election of officers at each session.

14. Any of the articles of the Constitution or By-laws may be altered, (except Article II of the Constitution.) at any meeting of the Association, by the vote of two-thirds of the members present.

MINUTES.

According to appointment, the Association met at 10 of the clock, a.m., Sept. 1st, with the Second Baptist Church of Chatham. The introductory sermon was preached by Eden S. White, from 1 John iv. 16: "God is love, &c." The Association was then called to order by Elder S. White, and Br. A. B. Jones was appointed Clerk. Prayer was made by Br. Reeves. The letters from the several Churches were read, and received, and a Business Committee was chosen of the following brethren; to wit, Elder W. P. Newman, Peter J. Jackson, Alfred Lewis, Henry Dawson, Edmund Walker, and Henry Stafford. Visiting brethren were invited to take seats with the Association.

The *delegates* present were Elder S. White, Bros. M. A. Johnson, A. D. Griffin, A. Siddles, and H. Stafford, of the *Second Baptist Church of Chatham*. Peter J. Jackson, and Samuel Stewart, of the *Mount Pleasant Church*. Alfred Lewis and Charles Johnson, of the *Macedonia Church of Elgin*. Henry Dawson, A. B. Jones, and John Reeves, of the *Second Baptist Church of London*. Edmund Walker and Ellis Simmons, of the *First Baptist of Dawn*. Deacon George French, of the *Union Baptist Church of Detroit*. Elder W. P. Newman and Deacon J. O. Bonner, of the *First Baptist Church of Toronto*—a *Corresponding Church*.

The visiting brethren present were, George Johnson, and Lewis Johnson, of *Camden*; William Anderson, *Township of Chatham*; Thomas H. Thompson, of *London*; George Butler, *Indiana, U. S.* There were also quite a number of *Sisters* present, notwithstanding the sickness at Chatham. The attendance was much larger than could be accommodated in the meeting house, and the meeting was not only good, but a *profitable* one.

The Business Committee reported the following officers for the Association for the ensuing year:—Elder S. White, Moderator; A. B. Jones, Clerk; Peter J. Jackson, Treasurer; and Elder W. P. Newman, Corresponding Secretary; which report was adopted.

A digest of the several letters was ordered to be published, and the Association adjourned till 2½ o'clock, p.m.

Prayer by Brother Walker.

AFTERNOON SESSION.

Prayer by Brother Stewart.

DIGEST OF LETTERS :

Second Baptist Church of Chatham.—We are thankful to God to meet you in our annual meeting. God has been good, though we have been careless, as to our duty to God and his cause. There has not been as much *union* among us as is desirable. We have had *no* pastor, a part of the year, though we have had preaching regularly. Elder S. White is now our pastor. May God bless you, in your deliberations. Pray for us. We have received by baptism, 3 ; by letter, 7 ; by experience, 3 ; excluded, 3 ; restored, none ; died 3 ; present number, 79. Money for the Minutes, 13s. 6d. We appoint as delegates, our beloved Elder S. White, A. D. Griffin, A. Siddle, H. Stafford, and M. A. Johnson.

M. A. JOHNSON, *Church Clerk.*

First Baptist Church of Dawn.—Dear Brethren, we send you Christian greeting, by our beloved brethren and messengers, Ed. Walker and Ellis Simmons. We are at peace among ourselves. God is *with us*, though still we are *unfaithful*. We keep up our regular meetings, though we have no pastor. Elder S. White preaches for us once a month. Pray for us.

We have received by baptism, 3 ; by letter, 1 ; by experience, 1 ; excluded, 2 ; present number, 23. Money for the Minutes, 10s.

ED. WALKER, *Church Clerk.*

Mount Pleasant Church.—"To the Association and Faithful in Christ Jesus." "Grace be to you, and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." Dear Brethren: Mr. G. H. Simpson has given us great trouble during much of the past year. We have excluded him, and are *now* at peace among ourselves. We rejoice that God has not left us. He has been a "present help in trouble." We have no pastor. Bro. S. Stewart preaches for us. We send as our delegates, Bros. S. Stewart and P. J. Jackson. We have received two candidates for baptism, but have *no one* to baptize them for us. Received by letter, none ; died, 1 ; excluded, 2 ; present number, 20. We beg that a *Missionary* may be appointed by the Association, who will visit us and other feeble churches. Pray for us.

P. J. JACKSON, *Church Clerk.*

Macedonian Church of Elgin.—Dear Brethren: God has not forsaken us. We have *no pastor*. We keep up our regular meetings, and have preaching sometimes. We still trust in the Lord. He will "help us, and that right early," &c. Pray for us. Brethren, we send you the true "*Macedonian cry—Come over and help us.*" We have received, 3 ; baptized, none ; died, none ; excluded, none ; present number, 8. Money for Minutes 5s. Our messengers are brethren A. Lewis C. Johnson, and —. Jones.

C. JOHNSON, *Church Clerk.*

Colchester Church.—Not represented in the Association this year, and no letter received from her.

A. B. J., *Clerk of Association.*

Second Baptist Church of London.—Dear Brethren: We give you Christian greeting, and hope God will be with you. As the Lord's, we say, with confidence, "He is our stronghold and Rock of defence," and in faith we do draw nigh to Him, and feel that He will bless us. Pray for us. Elder D. A. Turner, our beloved pastor, is with us monthly; but other dear brethren preach for us, at our other regular meetings. We have received 2, by baptism; by letter and experience, 12; excluded, none; died, none; present number, 25. Money for Minutes, 11s. 3d.

We send as delegates, brethren Henry Dawson, John Reeves, and A. B. Jones.

A. B. JONES, *Church Clerk.*

Union Baptist Church of Detroit.—With Christian salutation we send our beloved brother, Geo. French, as messenger, and would say, our beloved and highly esteemed pastor, Elder S. H. Davis, would go also, but he is very ill. Help us to pray that God will spare his dear life to us, and the Churches of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have reason to praise the Lord for his great goodness to us. Part of the year we were without a regular pastor, yet we kept up our meeting, and God was with us. God bless you, and will you, dear brethren, pray for us? We have received, by letter, 2; dismissed, by letter, 1; died, none; excluded, none; present number, 22. Money for Minutes, 10s.

RICHARD D. BAPTIST, *Church Clerk.*

A Corresponding Church—The First Baptist Church of Toronto sendeth Christian salutation to the "Anti-Slavery Baptist Association of Canada." We hope you will have a peaceable and profitable meeting. We pray that the God of the Church may be with you, to direct and bless you, and may the next year be the most *prosperous* one of your existence! May the spirit of *prayer*, and of *power* be upon the *pastors*, and *people* of your several Churches! Elder W. P. Newman, our beloved pastor, and Dea. J. O. Bonner, will represent us. We have had our trials during the past year, yet the Lord stood with us, and blessed us. We have had the Gospel *faithfully* preached among us, and the ordinances duly administered to us.

We have had an increase of membership to our Church. The Sabbath School has been timely kept up; and the monthly concert of *prayer* for the spread of the Gospel, and for the oppressed, has also been strictly observed. We have not forgotten the importance of praying for *ourselves*. Pray for us.

R. THOMAS, *Church Clerk.*

August 23, 1854.

It was voted, That Br. Dawson preach at 7½ o'clock; after which the Association adjourned.

Prayer by Br. Butler.

MORNING SESSION.—SECOND DAY.

Prayer by Br. Simmons.

It was voted, That the first articles of *faith and covenant*, adopted by the Association, be published in the next Minutes.

It was voted, That the Churches of this Association become members of the "*Canada Regular Baptist Missionary Society*."

It was voted, That we approve of the "*Baptist Reporter*," our denominational paper, and that we do what we can to sustain it.

It was voted, that we approve of McClay College, for the education of the Ministry, and that we do what we can to sustain it.

It was voted, That this Association delegate visitors to the several Associations, to effect a fraternal correspondence, and that Elder S. White go to the "Western Association," Rev. H. Dawson to the "Grand River Association," Deacon Geo. French to the "Michigan Association," Deacon A. Siddles to the "Indiana Association," and Elder W. P. Newman to the "Haldimand Association;" and that this resolution shall be their credential.

It was voted, That we cordially invite regular Baptist Churches so disposed, to unite with us, as an Association, that we may be a more useful body; and that we, to be so, will seek a *union* with our brethren of this and other countries.

It was voted, That we recommend that all regular Baptist Churches of this Province unite, at a future day, not distant, and petition the Provincial Parliament for a form of Church Government, in keeping with the usage of our denomination, that will enable us, as a denomination, to hold *Real Estate, in fee simple*, for necessary Church purposes, through Trustees, who shall be elected to office *at the will of the majority of the Members of each church, at a properly notified meeting*.

It was voted, That we approve of the "*Provincial Union*," and that we do what we can to sustain its several objects.

The Association adjourned till 2½ o'clock, p. m.

Prayer by Br. Stafford.

AFTERNOON SESSION—SECOND DAY.

Prayer by Br. Lewis.

It was voted, Brother J. O. Bonner preach at half-past seven o'clock, a. m.

It was voted, Treasurer's Report be received, and adopted.

It was voted, That Association remain an auxiliary to the American Baptist Free Mission Society.

It was voted, That we heartily approve of the *American Baptist*, the organ of the A. B. F. M. Society, as it is a religious and family newspaper of the right stamp; and that we do what we can to sustain it.

It was voted, That this Association greatly disapprove of the (so called) "Refugees' Home Society," and the general begging schemes in the name of the Colored people of this country.

It was voted, That in our judgment, it is the duty of all men, and especially of all christians, to abstain from the use of *ardent spirits, as a beverage, and from all traffic in it.*

It was voted, That we recommend to the several churches of this Association, to encourage the young ministers of their respective churches, to be more diligent in acquiring a greater knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, so that they may be fully prepared for the work of the ministry.

It was voted, That Br. A. B. Jones and Rev. W. P. Newman attend to the publishing of the Minutes.

It was voted that Rev. S. H. Davis (if spared) write the circular letter, and if not, Deacon Geo. French.

It was voted, That Elder W. P. Newman preach to-morrow (Sabbath) at 11 o'clock, and Rev. H. Dawson at 3 o'clock, p. m., and Br. H. Thompson at 7½ o'clock p. m.

It was voted, That the next Annual Meeting of the Association be held with the "First Baptist Church of Dawn."

It was voted, That Elder W. P. Newman preach the introductory sermon, and that Elder D. A. Turner be his alternate.

It was voted that we tender our heartfelt thanks to the brethren and friends in Chatham, for their hospitality to us during the sitting of this Association.

It was voted, To adjourn, to meet with First Baptist Church of Dawn, the 1st. Friday in September, 1855, at 10 o'clock, a. m.

Prayer by Elder White.

S. WHITE, *Moderator.*
A. B. Jones, *Clerk.*

NOTE.—The Meeting was one of deep interest. God was in it; and everything was done in harmony and love; and much good, we trust, will be the result. Much time was spent in prayer and conference. We talked freely with one another about our spiritual state, as individuals and churches. God met with, and blessed us. All felt it was good to be there,

A. B. J.
W. P. N.

CIRCULAR LETTER.

DEAR AND BELOVED BRETHREN:—

In addressing to you this our Annual Letter, allow us to call your prayerful attention to the importance of *a deeper tone of piety among us*. The spirit to be cultivated to secure this desirable end must be the spirit of prayer.

God has revealed himself as a God, who *answers* the prayers of his people; and hence the importance of having *a spirit* of prayer, on behalf of every effort for the glory of God, the welfare of Zion, and the conversion of sinners.

Prayer will not incline God to bless us and our efforts, but will *prepare us* to receive the blessing needed.

Our great need of prayer is seen in the fact that our blessed Lord was a man of earnest prayer—

“ The cold mountains and the midnight air,
Witnessed the fervor of his prayer.”

The Apostles and Primitive Disciples were all brethren and sisters of prayer; and the Church in every age, that has been *a praying Church*, has always succeeded in her mission in the world. A praying church is an humble church; a praying church is an active church; and a praying church is a reforming church; and all these qualities, dear brethren and sisters, are needed to enable us to accomplish our mission in this sin-ruined world.

As our Lord Jesus Christ has taught us the *importance* of prayer, and is ready to teach us *how* to pray, and as we shall fail without a spirit of prayer, let us learn this year from experience the real benefits of prayer, as to God's promises through Jesus our Lord, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who is promised to aid us.

Beloved Brethren, we are of opinion, that if the power referred to, be cultivated more than it has been heretofore, then we shall hear our ministers preach the glorious gospel of the blessed God with unusual power, and great will be the success of the Word, in purifying the churches and in converting the world.

Sept. 1st., 1854.

DECLARATION OF FAITH.

I.—OF THE SCRIPTURES.

We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction ; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter ; that it reveals the principle by which God will judge us ; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true centre of christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

II.—OF THE TRUE GOD.

That there is one, and only one true and living God, whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth ; inexpressibly glorious in holiness ; worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love ; revealed under the personal and relative distinctions of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost : equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

III. OF THE FALL OF MAN.

That man was created in a state of holiness, under the law of his maker ; but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state, in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice, being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of Satan, and of their own sinful passions, and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defence or excuse.

IV. OF THE WAY OF SALVATION.

That the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace ; through the Mediatorial Offices of the Son of God, who took upon him our nature, yet without sin, honored the law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death ; being arisen from the dead he is now enthroned in heaven, and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and all-sufficient Saviour.

V. OF JUSTIFICATION.

That the great Gospel blessing, which Christ of his fullness, bestows on such as believe on Him, is Justification ; that justification consists in the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness ; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through his own redemption and righteousness ; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

VI. OF THE FREENESS OF SALVATION.

That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel ; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith ; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to become subject to the Lord Jesus Christ ; which refusal will submit him to an aggravated condemnation.

VII.—OF GRACE IN REGENERATION.

That in order to be saved, we must be regenerated or born again ; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind, and is effected in a manner above our comprehension or calculation, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel ; and that its proper evidence is found in the holy fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

VIII.—OF GOD'S PURPOSE OF GRACE.

That election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners ; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end ; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely wise, holy and unchangeable ; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy ; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree ; that it is ascertained by its effects in all who believe the gospel ; is the foundation of christian assurance ; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves, demands and deserves our utmost diligence.

IX.—OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS.

That such only are real believers as endure unto the end ; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors ; that a special Providence watches over their welfare ; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

X.—HARMONY OF THE LAW AND GOSPEL.

That the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability which the scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfil its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.

XI.—OF A GOSPEL CHURCH.

That a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel, observing the ordinance of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only proper officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties, are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

XII.—OF BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER.

That Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its purifying power; that it is pre-requisite to the privileges of a Church relation, and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

XIII.—OF THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

That the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath; and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for that Rest which remaineth for the people of God.

XIV.—OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

That civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

XV.—OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED.

That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in

the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem ; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked and under the curse ; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

XVI.—OF THE WORLD TO COME.

That the end of the world is approaching ; that at the Last Day Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution ; that a solemn separation will then take place ; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy ; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God.

2 Peter iii. 11, 12.

